

**IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE IN MITCH ALBOM'S MEMOIR:
*TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE: AN OLD MAN, A YOUNG MAN, AND LIFE'S
GREATEST LESSON* (2006): HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGICAL
PERSPECTIVES**



**Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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by:

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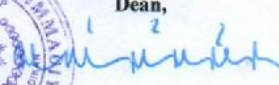
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ABSTRACT

This research is about the improving quality of life in Mitch Albom memoir in the *TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE* (2006) which analyzed based on Humanistic Psychological Perspectives. The aims of this study was to identified the indicators in quality of life, to describe the portrayal of improving quality of life in this memoir, and to defined the reason of the author address quality of life as the issue in *Tuesdays with Morrie* (2006). The primary data source was the memoir by Morrie Albom, *Tuesdays with Morrie* which announced 1997. The secondary data source was from several sources, such as: the author's biography, E-books, text of interview, and another references to support the analysis. The result of this study are: firstly, the indicators which described improving quality of life in the memoir. Secondly, show the portrayal of the issue in the memoir. Thirdly, showed that there was reason from the author to make people realized about importance to improve the quality of life, especially people who was suffered.

Keywords: *Humanistic Psychological Tuesdays with Morrie, quality of life,*

ABSTRAK

Studi ini adalah tentang meningkatkan kualitas kehidupan di dalam memoar karya Mitch Albom *Tuesdays with Morrie* (2006) yang dianalisa menggunakan Humanistic Psychological perspektif. Tujuan dari studi ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi indikator-indikator dalam kualitas kehidupan, untuk mengetahui bagaimana meningkatkan kualitas kehidupan digambarkan di dalam memoar ini, dan untuk mengetahui alasan penulis mengangkat isu kualitas kehidupan di daalam memoar *Tuesdays with Morrie* (2006). Data primer dari studi ini adalah memoar karya Mitch Albom yang berjudul *Tuesdays with Morrie* yang diterbitkan tahun 1997. Data sekunder dari studi ini berasal dari beberapa sumber, seperti: biografi penulis, buku-

buku online, teks wawancara, dan sumber yang lainnya untuk menganalisa. Hasil dari studi ini adalah: pertama, indikator-indikator yang menunjukkan meningkatkan kualitas kehidupan di dalam memoar. Kedua, hal-hal yang dapat menunjukkan adanya penggambaran dari isu di dalam memoar. Ketiga, menunjukkan adanya pemikiran dari penulis yang membuat orang lain menyadari tentang pentingnya untuk meningkatkan kualitas kehidupan, khususnya untuk orang yang menderita sakit.

Kata Kunci: *Humanistic Psychological, kualitas kehidupan, Tuesdays with Morrie*

1. INTRODUCTION

The research about *Tuesdays with Morrie* have been done by others researchers which using another objects and theories. Some researchers examine *Tuesdays with Morrie* based on philosophical which focusing on life inspiration (Jamilatun, 2015). Others researchers investigate the main characters' conflict in the memoir (Priadi, 2009). The next researchers used sociology of literature to analyzed main character's perspectives on American values (Daris 2014).

Furthermore, some researchers use the main character 'Morrie' as the object in their research. They analyzed it with different theory, one of them is Daris (2014) which analyzed this memoir used sociological theory. She focused on Morrie's perspectives to American value in the memoir. Her result is about the importance of human relation above all values. Those are delivered through his opinion, criticism, and suggestions.

Relating with previous study above, there are some differences in their theories and object that have been used with my research. In my research is about improving quality of life which is depicted in main Morrie's character which analyzed used Humanistic Psychological perspectives. The novelty of this research is to illustrated the indicators of improving quality of life, to describe the portrayal of improving quality of life, and to explained the reason of the author addressed the issue in the memoir.

Carl Rogers (1961: 122), has articulation of the “fully functioning person”. The fully functioning person was described as having qualities such as being nondefensive[sic] and open to experience; fully living in the moment; having trust in his or her own bodily responses to the world; recognizing his or her freedom; being creative; reliable and constructive; and living a rich, full life. Rogers also found personality development on humanistic psychology, that is the acquisition of essential traits: congruency, unconditional positive regard for the client, and empathic understanding.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is using qualitative method, which defined by (Denzim and Lincoln 2000: 8) emphasizes the qualities of entities, processes and meaning that are not experimentally examined or measured in terms of quantity, amount intensity or frequently. The objectives of this research is to analyzed the indicators of improving quality of life in the *Tuesdays with Morrie* (2006) memoir using Humanistic Psychological perspectives. The object of this research are material and formal objects. The material object is *Tuesdays with Morrie: An Old Man, A Young Man, and Life's Greatest Lesson* by Mitch Albom which is announced in 1997. The formal object is of humanistic psychological perspectives by Carl Rogers as theory to analyzed the issue of this research.

There are two types of data source that have been used in this research: primary data and secondary data. The primary data source is *Tuesdays with Morrie* memoir by Mitch Albom. The secondary data source is from several sources, such as: the author's biography, E-books, text of interview, and another references to support the analysis.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Indicators of Improving Quality of Life

3.1.1 Emotional Well-Being

3.1.1.1 Contentment

It is important to have moods and enjoyment to improve the quality of life. Emotional well-being of Morrie is dominant with his enjoyment to dance. He was a good dancer, whatever the genre of the music, when he heard the music play e will dance like professionally.

3.1.1.2 Self-Concept

Based on the research, Morrie has self-concept to decided whatever he thinks it is good for him and his family. He chooses to be an inspiration and he wants to support other people who get illness like him.

3.1.1.3 Lack of Stress

This part is about Morrie's lack of stress that he could not dance anymore and doing anything without help. He tried to stay positive and fell grateful that he still alive anyway. While he was in the situation, he gives his self a good crying therapy as the solution to make the stress out.

3.1.2 Interpersonal Relations

Interpersonal relations are communicating between two people or more to get and give information. It can be family, friends, and society.

3.1.2.1 Interactions

People which lived in society are always have to be interactives with one and another. Based on the research, there is community that Morrie's was joined. One of them is community of dancing. Since he could not dance again, he

makes some calls to invites his community to visiting his house. Then they get discussion and sharing each other, especially sharing about death.

3.1.2.2 Relationships

This part is more closed than interactions part, it is between Morrie and family, and friends. He being closed with his family moreover since he was in healthy condition, it more closed since he get illness. He realized that family is the most important things in the world and there is no anything can substitute them.

3.1.2.3 Supports

Based on the research, supports are needed for people who get problem, especially people who get illness. But, in the memoir Morrie as known one that need a support, instead he supporting other people. There is a girl that joined his sociology class, she does not feel comfortable. Then Morrie give such exercise in the class which had purpose to learn how to get interactions with other without feeling uncomfortable.

3.1.3 Material Well-Being

3.1.3.1 Financial Status

In this research show how was Morrie get income to fulfill daily need. He was a professor which taught sociology class in Brandeis University. Before he became professor, he was work at the Chestnut Lodge hospital of mentality at Washington, D.C.

3.1.3.2 Employment

As known that Morrie was a professor in Brandeis University, he was surrounding with good work environment. Besides that, he was an informant in television show that show

about his struggle to make his death as final project. Final project means the memoir which are published to the public. Because of that television show he was surrounded by people which correlated to it.

3.1.4 Personal Development

Morrie shows his struggle through his disease. He tried to develop his personal development/competence, focused in social environment. It is shown by changing his point of view in meaning and purpose of life.

3.1.5 Physical Well-Being

3.1.5.1 Health

This part showed about Morrie's symptoms of health. It began when he gets asthma in the sixties, then he began with trouble walking and he fell down the steps of a theater. He tried to meet a doctor to find out what disease that he was getting. The doctor does many tests to his body, until they found it. Finally, Morrie was known suffering amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) Lou Gehrig.

3.1.5.2 Activities of Daily Living

Because of the illness, Morrie needed special daily activities. He met routinely with a therapist who helped him to make the body keep working like usual. He also met a teacher of meditation to make his psychology ready to face the disease.

3.1.6 Self-Determination

3.1.6.1 Choices

Morrie was diagnosed with ALS, but he made choices to continue his self with good purpose to be an inspiration to others.

3.1.6.2 Goals and Personal Value

His personal value is to learn how to love others and how to make people love him. He was care to others, instead he was sick. He argued that when he giving something to others, it means time, he fell alive with that.

3.1.7 Social inclusion

Morrie changes his society by changed the habits when visiting people who was sick not only for empathy but also he wants to be listener which listening people who come visited him.

3.1.8 Human

It is important to respect oneself, for Morrie when we can respect ourselves then we get to respect other.

3.2 Depiction of Improving Quality of Life

3.2.1 Through Character and Characterization

3.2.1.1 Feeling Sorry for Oneself

Feeling sorry for oneself it not everybody can do it. After Morrie was diagnosis ALS, he sometimes mourns that could not do anything without help. However, he realized that life must go on, he will make it more has quality until the end. He treats his self to feeling sorry and accept the destiny. Moreover, with his disease he fell so lucky, he gets chance to say good bye with his lovely people.

3.2.1.2 Concern in Death

Morrie told that everybody know they will die. There is better approach when you know you are going to die, and to be prepared it any time. When you know you will die soon you will be living your daily very differently.

3.2.1.3 Concern in Family

Family is the most important things to Morrie, there is no substitute for it. He felt grateful when in his end time he was surrounded by his family who give him supports and loved.

3.2.1.4 Expressing Emotions

Morrie has line, if you are already head emotions of fear let it come inside. Then all you need is to control that fear become your confidences.

3.2.1.5 Less Concern in Money

Money is not always can solve human's problem, money cannot substitute for kindness and capability. Morrie was dying, he realized that he does not need a lot of money, but he need a lot of love from his closed family and friends.

3.2.1.6 Rules of Marriage

There are few rules of marriage, respect each other, keep to compromise, open-minded, setting the value of marriage.

3.2.2 Through Events

3.2.2.1 Declining Health Condition

Morrie got asthma in sixties, then he got amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). This illness makes him could not move freely without help.

3.2.2.2 Enhancement of Job

He worked at the mentality hospital Chestnut Lodge at Washington D.C, after he get master degree and Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. Then, few years later, he became a professor of sociology at Brandeis University.

3.2.3 Through Setting of Place

This memoir mostly takes in the Morrie's house, but there are some places that found; apartment; small hotel in the Connecticut woods; apartment in Bronx; Morrie's house at West Newton, Massachusetts.

3.2.4 Through Style

3.2.4.1 Diction

There is some diction that have been used by the author to show improving quality of life, it can be seen by the evidence below:

"Sometimes, in the morning," he said. "That's when I mourn. I feel around my body, I move my fingers and my hands—whatever I can still move—and I mourn what I've lost. I mourn the slow, insidious way in which I'm dying. But then I stop mourning." (Albom, 2006: 57)

The diction of stop mourning show that Morrie accept his sick condition and decided to continuing his life with gratefully.

3.2.4.2 Symbols

3.2.4.2.1 Wiping someone ass (represent to weakness)

3.2.4.2.2 Bird on the shoulder (represent to reminder of death)

3.2.4.3 Imagery

"Yes. I look out that window every day. I notice the change in the trees, how strong the wind is blowing. It's as if I can see time actually passing through that windowpane. Because I know my time is almost done, I am drawn to nature like I'm seeing it for the first time." (Albom, 2006: 84)

3.3 Reason the Author Addressed Improving Quality of Life as the Issue

Mitch Albom's reason addressed the issue is to help others people who has suffering like Morrie to make the time more has quality and advantage; to share how to face dying like his professor; to share about

life's lesson that he was get from his old professor. Furthermore, this memoir is the result of Mitch visiting to Morrie and discussing about life.

3.4 Discussion

Psychology of well-being has two elements; positive and negative elements that can be felt by the subject in the past. Carl Rogers (1961: 122), called this as the “fully functioning person”. The fully functioning person was described as having qualities such as being nondefensive[*sic*] and open to experience; fully living in the moment; having trust in his or her own bodily responses to the world; recognizing his or her freedom; being creative; reliable and constructive; and living a rich, full life.

In the memoir, the fully functioning person has clearly described, such as Rogers argued that fully functioning person as having qualities. Rogers explained the qualities means such as; being non defensive and open to experience, Morrie get sick at sixties, he was a professor he got a lot of experiences to share.; Fully living in the moment, the class which met by Morrie and Mitch has held on every Tuesdays in fourteen meetings, for example, talked about family, Morrie has back to the moment when his mother was died and also the other moments that he had.; Having trust in his bodily responses to the world, Morrie was trust himself after he decided to make his meeting with Mitch as final project that can be help others who suffering liked him by read this memoir and get lot of knowledge; Reliable and constructive, since Morrie knows that he was sick, he decided to be reliable to other people. He made a deal to meet every people who visiting him. He answers a lot of letters from his audience of television program that share same feeling with Morrie. He tried to reliable even he was sick.; Full life, Morrie get all he needed in his life to complete his psychology. He got family who never leave him when he was sick, he got a lot of lovey friend that come to visited him and sharing the experience, he got so much supports from others by

sending him a lot of letters. His life is full, his soul is complete, his psychology is well.

Rogers found the acquisition of three essential traits: congruency, unconditional positive regard for the client, and empathic understanding. In research, congruency shown when Morrie told Mitch that he was not feeling jealousy with younger people than him, because of he was on that period. He accepts his real self and realized that he should not jealousy with them. Instead they should envy because they could not be in his period right now, but Morrie was in their period. Unconditional positive regard, shown when a lot of people sending him letters to share with when they get Morrie experiences about disease, his ex-students college and his friends visiting him to give support. Empathic understanding shown when Morrie decided to continuing his life after he know that he got unforgiving illness. He makes his life more has quality than before.

In this memoir, the author illustrated a Humanistic of Psychology phenomenon. People who have self-concept will be able to be fully functioning person. In this memoir, fully functioning person appears by Morrie Schwartz.

4. CONCLUSION

After analyzing *Tuesdays with Morrie*: an old man, a young man, and life's greatest lesson by Mitch Albom, the researcher draws some conclusion.

Firstly, there are eight indicators of improving the quality of life by Schalock. There are: emotional well-being, interpersonal relations, material well-being, personal development, physical well-being, self-determination, social inclusion and human. Emotional well-being occurring in the novel that is Morrie's feeling in enjoyment, he has self-concept, and also lack of stress. Then, interpersonal relations that is shown in this memoir is communicating between the main character with his family and friends. Interpersonal relations also include interactions between social contacts and about support in

emotional and feedback. Material well-being that was described in the memoir is about financial status and employment. It tells about Morrie's job to get income for fulfill daily need, from lower job until he became a professor. Then, personal development is changing Morrie's point of view about purpose and meaning of life. Physical well-being tells about physical symptoms of sick and activities of daily living. It means the activities after the diagnosis of the disease, Morrie could not do anything without help. Self-determination, it includes choices of options and opportunities, tells about Morrie's choices to deal with his disease and continuing his life be more has quality with his condition; and goals and personal value, by his choices he also make his personal value to be good to do anything although he is sick. Then, social inclusion/ community role of Morrie is by giving his opinion about changes the culture in society. One of the idea is people who had suffering Lou Gehrig could not be ashamed. Human respect, it shown how Morrie respect his self and others.

Secondly, improving quality of life which depicted in the memoir can be seen through the character and characterization which there are six personality based on the memoir. Feeling sorry for oneself which illustrated by Morrie which is accepted his condition because of the disease. Concern in death is Morrie character thinking more about going to died. Concern in family is the character focus on his family, he was feel grateful to have family who never leave. Expressing emotions is the character get experience about emotions in the past, when he gets the same emotions on this day he may know how to solve it. Less concern in money is the character does not think that money is everything, money can make happiness. Whereas there are other things that could make happiness such as time, skill, and anything that can be useful for others. Last is rules of marriage, the character was telling about rules of marriage, one of them is do not being selfish.

Thirdly, the reason why the author addressed improving quality of life in *Tuesdays with Morrie* memoir. There are some reasons is to help others people who has suffering like Morrie to make the time left has more benefit and quality. Then, the author wants to share with others people how to face dying like his professor. Another reason is to share about life's lesson that he got from his professor. This memoir is Morrie's idea, then Mitch re-writing his lesson and made this memoir for paying the medical bills of Morrie, but he was dead before this memoir published.

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